

Message Text

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47

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 SAM-01 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 NSCE-00 EUR-12 IO-10 NIC-01 OMB-01

/085 W

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R 140804Z FEB 75

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3803

INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR, CH

SUBJECT: ILYICHEV RETURNS TO CHINA

1. ACCORDING TO AN AFP PEKING FEB. 12 STORY, MOSCOW'S CHIEF NEGOTIATOR AT THE SINO-SOVIET BORDER TALKS, LEONID ILYICHEV, RETURNED TO PEKING FEB. 12 AFTER A SIX MONTH ABSENCE. NEITHER NCNA NOR THE PRC-OWNED HONG KONG PRESS HAVE YET DIRECTLY NOTED THE RETURN OF ILYICHEV, WHO REPORTEDLY HAS BEEN OCCUPIED WITH OTHER THAN SINO-SOVIET AFFAIRS. ILYICHEV WAS GREETED BY HAN NIEN-LUNG WHO IS APPARENTLY TAKING OVER FROM YU CHAN AS THE TOP PRC NEGOTIATOR.

2. IN TANDEM WITH CHOU'S FEBRUARY REPORT TO THE 4TH NPC WHICH MAKES A CASE OF SOVIET FAITHLESSNESS AND PERFIDY AND URGES MOSCOW "TO DO SOMETHING TO SOLVE A BIT OF THE PROBLEM," PRC MEDIA HAS LAUNCHED A HEAVY BARRAGE OF ANTI-SOVIET COMMENTARY.
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TARIES SETTING FORTH PRC TERRITORIAL CLAIMS TO THE DISPUTED

BORDER AREAS. UNDOUBTEDLY TIMED TO "WELCOME" ILYICHEV, PRC MEDIA COVERAGE HAS INCLUDED A SIGNED ARTICLE FROM PEOPLE'S DAILY (FEB. 12) CASTIGATING THE SOVIETS AS THE "BIGGEST INTERNATIONAL EXPLOITERS" AND OTHER PIECES PORTRAYING A STRONG CHINA WITH FIGHTERS READY TO DEFEND HER TERRITORY STRETCHING NORTH TO CHEN PAO ISLAND AND SOUTH TO THE PARACEL AND SPRATLEY ISLANDS.

3. ACCORDING TO REPORTS FROM EMBASSY MOSCOW, SOVIET OFFICIALS IN EARLY JANUARY DENIED PLANS FOR ILYICHEV TO RETURN TO CHINA "SOON." HIS RETURN LESS THAN A MONTH AFTER CHOU'S CALL SEEMS CALCULATED TO PUNCTURE PEKING'S PORTRAIT OF SOVIET INTRANSIGENCE AND PERHAPS TO PUT THE BALL BACK IN THE PRC'S COURT.
CROSS

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